ABOVE AND BEYOND NORMAL DUTIES

Grouped here with Dr. Sebrell (second from right) are three employees who have just received incentive awards for exceptional service in behalf of their organization. They are (left to right) Mr. Davis, OD; Mr. Cogan, NCI; and Mr. Schmehl, DRG.

Cash awards for work suggestions and outstanding efficiency were presented to three employees at NIH's first group awards ceremony, held in Wilson Hall auditorium on October 1.

The awards, presented by Dr. W. H. Sebrell, Jr., Director of NIH, went to James B. Davis, Acting Chief of the Purchase and Supply Branch; Francis L. Schmehl, chemist, Division of Research Grants; and George W. Cogan, physical science aide, Cancer Institute.

For extraordinary performance of his duties as supply officer for NIH during its period of biggest expansion, Mr. Davis received $200. The procedures he originated and developed for purchasing and handling supplies, Dr. Sebrell said, have saved NIH thousands of dollars and materially benefited scientists faced with some unanticipated need, developing in the course of experiments. Since the Purchase Section was set up at NIH in 1947, the time required for processing requisitions has been cut from about 20 days to less than 3 days. Mr. Davis started at NIH in 1938, as a clerk, at the age of 22.

To Mr. Schmehl went an award of $55 for effecting a savings to NIH of $1,200 in the purchase of a laboratory drug. After an order for the drug had been placed, he learned through a newspaper story of an impending price drop. He proceeded on his own initiative to reopen negotiations and succeeded in having the drug shipped at a reduced price.

For his initiative in devising a flask with a stopcock sealed onto the bottom, Mr. Cogan of NCI's Laboratory of Chemical Pharmacology received a $15 award. The new device eliminated the necessity for dismantling apparatus used in steam distillation of chemical compounds. Contents of the flask could be emptied merely by opening the stopcock.

SIX FROM NIH TO GIVE PAPERS AT APHA MEETING

The 79th annual meeting of the American Public Health Association, largest assembly in the world of public health workers, will open in San Francisco on October 29, with more than 20 representatives from NIH scheduled to attend.

Over 5,000 health specialists from all parts of the Western Hemisphere are expected to be present for the scientific sessions and to view the scores of technical and scientific exhibits.

NIH's contribution to the demonstrations and exhibits will include a performance of the rapid flocculation test developed at NIM for diagnosis of trichinosis and other parasitic diseases by Mr. John Bozicevich; a demonstration of heart disease detection methods utilizing Lead I of the electrocardiograph by Dr. Thomas Dawber, Director of NIH's epidemiology study at Framingham, Mass.; and an exhibit by Dr. R. M. Cole of NMI on herpangina, a childhood disease "rediscovered" last year by NIH scientists.

Dr. Russell M. Wilder, Director of MMID, will serve as chairman of a panel discussion group and will participate in another.

Six NIH representatives are scheduled to present papers at the five-day meeting. They are Dr. Albert L. Russell, NIDR; Drs. Cole and Dorland Davis, NMI; Dr. W. C. Hueper and Miss Rosalie Peterson, NCI; and Dr. Leonard Kurland, NIMH.

Among the distinguished speakers slated for the APHA meeting is Dr. Brock Chisholm, Director General of the World Health Organization.
Few fields of research in recent years have stimulated greater interest than steroid chemistry. Much of this resulted from the widely publicized use of cortisone and ACTH in treating a variety of disorders, particularly the arthritic diseases, which alone cost the Nation over a billion dollars a year in manpower production loss. (The average patient among our seven or eight million arthritics loses an estimated eighty working days a year.)

At NIAMD, much of the work of the Section on Steroids, headed by Dr. Erich Mosettig with a staff of 15, is devoted to investigations of new possibilities for synthesizing cortisone. These studies include analysis of African strophanthus seeds for sarmentogenin, which offers an ideal starting point in the synthesis of cortisone and such allied adrenal substances as Compound F. They also include a program carried out in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture for analyzing certain American, Mexican, and African plants in a search for the so-called steroidal saponins and sapogenins, particularly becogenin. This aglycone is oxygenated in Ring C and is about equal to desoxycholic acid in ox bile as a starting material for cortisone.

Dr. Mosettig's staff is also investigating ways by which such steroids as cholesterol, stigmasterol, and ergosterol (all present in industrial waste materials) could be utilized in the partial synthesis of important hormones. To these studies has been added recently a joint project with the Department of Agriculture for investigating tomatidine, a steroidal product extracted from the leaves of a large variety of tomato plants, including the commercial Rutgers variety. In addition, the Section is investigating the possibilities of total synthesis of cortisone, starting from simple coal tar products.

The search for and study of new micro- and submicro-analytical methods for the qualitative and quantitative determination of steroids and allied compounds represents another aspect of the Section's work. Here the scientists are concerned especially with the adrenal cortex hormones, their natural metabolites and derivatives, as obtained by extraction from body fluids, organs, and excreta, and in enzymatic reactions. In this phase of their work they share to a certain extent the interests of the Section on Endocrinology, with which they maintain intimate cooperation.

In all these aspects of steroid research, the Section's chemists and biochemists are supported by ultraviolet and infrared spectroscopy in problems of analysis, synthesis, and structural elucidation.

Dr. Kenneth Endicott, Scientific Director, DRG, has been invited by Dr. William R. Lovelace, Chairman of the Armed Forces Medical Policy Council, to accompany him this month to Stockholm, Paris, and London, where they will evaluate research programs for the Department of Defense.

Dr. C. B. Philip, entomologist at NML's Rocky Mountain Laboratory, has been elected president of the International Northwestern Conference on Diseases in Nature Communicable to Man. The conference met recently in Banff, Alberta, Canada.

A leaflet listing the dates of meetings of medical and scientific societies and allied organizations from September through June has been published. Copies may be obtained from the office of Miss Rhobia Taylor, Ext. 546.

The NIH baseball team is now affiliated with the Recreation and Welfare Association (c/o Mrs. Rebecca Voit, Room 2116, Bldg. 8) for use in obtaining prizes distributed in their activities.

Contributions to the 1951 Crusade for Freedom fund drive may be made through keymen in each Institute or the Personnel Branch. This year's goal is 25 million members and 3 1/2 million dollars in contributions.

The first issue of the new NIH Calendar of Events was distributed recently to all employees, and will be a regular Friday feature.

The NIH baseball team is now affiliated with the Recreation and Welfare Association. Britton Smith, team president, has been made athletic director of the Association.
RED CROSS BLOOD UNIT AT NIH THIS WEEK

With defense officials calling for 2,800,000 pints of blood by next summer, Washington's regional blood center is currently stepping up its donor recruitment program, along with other Red Cross centers throughout the country.

Wednesday, October 17, the regional center will send its mobile unit to NIH. If you haven't already, there's still time to phone Personnel Ext. 2071, and arrange an appointment.

The Red Cross staff can handle 25 to 30 donors an hour. Giving blood is painless, and the whole business takes no longer than 35 or 40 minutes.

If you have any qualms about parting with a pint of blood, it may interest you to know that your body manufactures about 900 billion red cells a day. These are the tiny, hard working, oxygen-carrying disks that make up most of the solid matter in blood. You've got about 30 trillion of them in your body.

These cells of course are expendable. They last for about 120 days, then new cells replace them. This makes donating a pint of blood a fairly simple matter. You merely give something that is being constantly replaced anyway.

FIRST AID SUPPLIES

Emergency medical supplies have been placed in lobbies and shop areas of NIH buildings. Dr. John M. Lynch, Employee Health Service Medical Officer, said the first aid kits are to be used when necessary for major injuries before medical assistance is received.

The kits contain no materials such as band-aids for treating minor injuries, which should continue to receive the prompt attention of one of the Health Units. After regular working hours, the Guard Office is responsible for treatment of minor injuries and for arranging medical assistance in case of major emergencies.

Dr. Lynch urges all employees to protect their legal rights under Employees' Compensation by reporting promptly all work-connected injuries and suspected illnesses.

INDIA'S CANCER SOCIETY PATTERNED AFTER NCI

An official cancer control agency has been inaugurated in India by the Minister of Health, NCI reports.

Operations of the new Indian Cancer Society will follow the pattern of NCI's control program, according to the society's president. It plans wide distribution of all cancer facts, and will work with professional groups in disseminating information on improved methods of diagnosis and treatment.

Oral cancer accounts for the highest cancer death rates in India and is attributed to two unusual tobacco habits. One is smoking chuttas, or cigars, with the lighted end in the mouth. The other is using khaini, a tobacco and lime mixture, which is deposited behind the lower lip.

FOREIGN LECTURERS

British experience in protecting public health during World War II and dealing with postwar problems was discussed by Dr. Leslie Harris, Director of the Dunn Nutritional Laboratory, Cambridge University, in a lecture delivered last week in Wilson Hall.

Earlier, Dr. K. Linderstrom-Lang, Director of the Carlsberg Laboratory in Copenhagen, delivered a series of lectures at NIH on protein and enzyme chemistry.

HARVEST DANCE

Wilson Hall will be the scene of a "white elephant" sale and fall harvest dance on Saturday night, Nov. 3. The sale begins at eight-thirty and dancing at ten. Tables will be set up in the cafeteria for bridge and canasta fans. Bring your discarded "elephants" to Mrs. Ernesine Gibbons, Room 1009, Bldg. T-6.

A midwesterner, Belle comes from St. Croix Falls, Wis. She likes winter sports and wishes Washington had more to offer in the way of snow and cold weather. Her favorite city is mile-high Denver, where winters come early and linger long, with none of the seasonal debility of Washington, where the Weather Man seldom de-

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How Library Helps Scientists at NIH

Like sunlight in its relationship to photosynthesis, communication is a prime mover in scientific pursuits. No important advance is possible without ready access to information. This is perhaps truer today than ever before. For science's fund of knowledge has grown enormously. And much of that growth stems from the pooling of knowledge that is the method of science.

At NIH, as at all research institutions, the Library is an indispensable adjunct to scientific inquiry. Without this reference to the past, few scientists could carry on their work with confidence.

Through the Library, some 1,200 current periodicals from all over the world are available to NIH staff members. And lining its shelves are 90,000 volumes covering almost every subject known to science and medicine.

The importance of the Library in disseminating information can be gauged by the fact that it made 50,350 loans in the past fiscal year, with 5,522 of these requests filled from outside sources.

Within the last six months the Library, which has a staff of 17 headed by Mr. Scott Adams, has acquired more new titles than in any comparable period in its history. Now being added are substantial back files of important journals, such as Analyst, Mikrochemie, and Naturwissenschaften. What this can mean to researchers is illustrated by an inquiry from an NIH scientist concerning the Zeitschrift für Electrochemie. When he was told the Library had the complete file from 1894 to date, he remarked that finding the journal here was like a wonderful Christmas gift to him.

So many and varied are the questions posed for the Library that its trained staff members seldom raise an eyebrow over an unusual request for information. Some require considerable digging, like the one from a doctor who asked, "Did we offer an internship at the PHS outpatient clinic at Hudson and Jay Streets in New York in 1934--and if so, how many beds did the clinic have?" On another occasion an inquirer sought help in tracking down the source of the quotation, "The crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways shall be made smooth." (New Testament.)

Sometimes, requests come in that are so fragmentary that anordinate amount of time is required to fill them. This is the case when an inquirer supplies only the initials of journals -- sometimes not even a date.

The kind of help the Library frequently gives researchers is illustrated by an NCI bibliography on the chemotherapy of cancer. The Library supplied all the publications from its own collections and through interlibrary loans. Another request entailed verifying over 300 references for cancer nursing bibliographies.

In preparation for transfer of the Library to the Clinical Center, the staff is now busy reappraising its collections, culling out outdated textbooks and reviewing the need for new texts.

When the Clinical Center is completed, the NIH Library will occupy the east end of the 5th floor. Space is being provided for 100,000 volumes, and the stack areas will have semiprivate reading tables. Quarters will include a special chemistry reading room and a large current periodical reading lounge.

Special facilities are planned for electronic equipment for the reading of microfilm and microcards.